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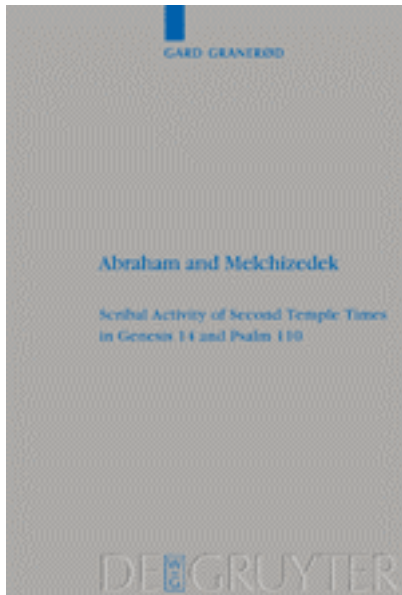
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Granerød, Gard

Abraham and Melchizedek: Scribal Activity of Second Temple Times in Genesis 14 and Psalm 110

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This book is a reworked version of a doctoral dissertation defended by Gard Granerød at MF Norwegian School of Theology on 11 December 2008 (v). This study of Gen 14 critiques previous traditio-historical approaches that supposed a lack of textual integrity in Gen 14. Except for Gen 14:18–20, the so-called “Melchizedek episode,” which is deemed a “secondary interpolation” (7), Granerød considers Gen 14* (Granerød’s symbol for Gen 14 minus vv. 18–20) to be “a unified and internally consistent narrative” (16). Granerød takes a theoretical framework of diachronic, inner-biblical intertextuality as a starting point for his hypothesis that several biblical texts overlooked in earlier scholarship are relevant for explaining the origin of Gen 14 (9–14): 1 Sam 30; Gen 10; Deut 1–3; Num 10–21; and Ps 110 (8, 18–19). According to Granerød, the interpretation of Ps 110 “functioned as a catalyst for an additional assimilation,” the personification of Melchizedek (Ps 110:4) in the Melchizedek episode of Gen 14:18–20 (19). Granerød’s study aims to clarify the date, authorship, and the manner and meaning of the composition of Gen 14 by means of the paradigm of diachronic, inner-biblical intertextuality (15).

After the introduction (1–21), the consecutive parts of this volume go into the composition history of Gen 14* (part 2, 23–152), the literary origin of the Melchizedek

episode in Gen 14:18–20 (part 3, 153–246), and an evaluation of how Gen 14:18–20 was added to Gen 14 and how this connects with Second Temple–period scribal activity (part 4, 247–60). Part 5 consists of abbreviations, bibliography, and indices (261–317).

In section 2, on Gen 14's characteristics, textual integrity, and textual criticism (25–46), Granerød first endeavors to establish features that distinguish Gen 14 from other parts of the patriarchal narratives in the book of Genesis (25–30). While Granerød may be right that a context of military conflict, world politics, and detailed itineraries appears unparalleled outside of Gen 14, some features do have parallels, contrary to his assertions. That is, an “abundance of names” also appears in the Table of the Nations (Gen 10), albeit of tribes, cities, and putative founding fathers. Granerød's argument for borrowings of Gen 14* from Gen 10 (115–21) also implies that Gen 14 is not totally separate from the rest of the patriarchal narratives. Further, in Granerød's view, the so-called “profanity” of Gen 14, which would appear from the absence of any reference to divine intervention, is only altered by the insertion of the divine blessing of Gen 14:18–20 (26–27). However, Gen 14:22 relates Abraham's oath to the “Lord God Most High, maker of heaven and earth,” an oath that further implies divine involvement beyond Gen 14:18–20. Thus, Granerød's presentation of Gen 14* over against 14:18–20 appears somewhat one-sided with regard to the aspect of divine involvement. With regard to the view of 14:18–20 as a secondary interpolation (31–32), Granerød adduces two secondary texts, Jubilees 13:28–29 and the Genesis Apocryphon 22:18–26, as evidence that Gen 14:18–20 was perceived already in ancient times as an interruption of the flow of the narrative about Abram's meeting with the king of Sodom (Gen 14:17, 21–24). However, a larger block of text than that cited by Granerød, 1QapGen ar 22:12–26, gives the impression that the Genesis Apocryphon does follow the flow of the text in Gen 14:17, 18–20, 21–24, for 1QapGen ar 22:12–14 relates that the king of Sodom went up to meet Abram in the valley of Shaveh (cf. Gen 14:17), with further reference to Salem (1QapGen ar 22:13), which provides a link to the intermediate setting of the episode about Melchizedek, king of Salem (1QapGen ar 22:14–17; Gen 14:18–20). 1QapGen ar 22:18–26 then parallels Gen 14:21–24. Jubilees 13:28–29 may be an imperfect example, since just before Jubilees 13:26 a lacuna in the textual transmission of Jubilees has been identified (see O. S. Wintermute in *OTP* 2:84 n. f). Granerød's criticism of previous dissections of Gen 14 and his defense of Gen 14* as a consistent narrative leave a better-argued impression (30–40). With a view to textual criticism, Granerød points out some scribal issues, “inner-Masoretic development” of divine names in MT Gen 14:22, and secondary clarification in LXX and SP Gen 14:19 (41–45). As to Granerød's interpretation of Gen 14 as a “wedge” between two promise texts, Gen 13 and Gen 15 (45–46), I do not understand why an interruption of a narrative theme of promise by an intermediate topic necessarily implies secondary insertion, if this interchange could also be a matter of narrative technique. For instance,

the Joseph story starts in Gen 37, is interrupted by another story, that about Judah and Tamar (Gen 38), then continues in Gen 39. The argument of interruption is not necessarily convincing to substantiate a supposed secondary insertion, even if traditions behind Gen 14 could have a separate provenance.

In section 3, on Gen 14* and the Abraham tradition (47–59), Granerød argues for a relatively late elevation of the position of Abraham in connection with the “self-comprehension of the people of Israel” (47). He thus refers to the fact that Exod 1 only names the patriarch Jacob. Yet this is a somewhat artificial argument, since Exod 1 continues the narrative flow of Gen 50, whereas Exod 3:6, 15, 16 and 4:5 do mention the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in an episode essential to the narrative of Exodus, the call of Moses. Granerød does not mention references to Abraham in Exod 2:24; 6:3, 8; 32:13; 33:1; Lev 26:42; Num 32:11; and Deut 1:8; 6:10; 9:5, 27; 29:13; 30:20; and 34:4 in relation to covenant, divine appearance, promise, and remembrance. In his section on references to Abraham outside the Pentateuch (48–59), Granerød aims to indicate a relatively insignificant role for Abraham, arguing that he is “seldom referred to in the Hebrew Bible,” pointing out twenty-three verses outside the Pentateuch. The significance of the fact that Abraham recurs in brief accounts of salvation history in the historical literature is relativized by Granerød’s observation that “these texts are generally late” (51). Poetic references to Abraham in Pss 47:10 and 105:6, 9, 42 are part of psalms of which the former is relatively difficult to date, while the latter is attributed a late date in view of its “accumulation of biblical traditions,” which leads Granerød to preclude evidence for “a pre-exilic veneration of Abraham as the most prominent patriarch” (53). Granerød’s late dating of Ps 47 depends on the argument developed by A. de Pury that the use of אלהים as “proper name,” which would have been invented by the author of the Priestly source, is “not older than the Priestly Source” (52). Prophetic references to Abraham are generally dated to the postexilic period (53–58). Granerød’s argument against a widespread Abraham tradition in the monarchic, pre-exilic period relies on the late chronological dating of extrapentateuchal references to Abraham (58–59) but leaves the above-noted references to Abraham in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy undiscussed.

In section 4, on Gen 14* and the composition history of the Abraham narratives (60–78), Granerød discusses the literary growth of Gen 14* as part of Gen 14–17, which is surrounded by supposedly “earlier narrative about Abraham and Lot” (62). Granerød contests previous suppositions that Gen 15 would comprise allusions to Gen 14 and connects God’s promise in 15:5 with that in 13:16 (73–76).

In section 5 (79–98) Granerød attempts to provide a literary answer to the question why Gen 14* was composed and inserted into the Abraham narrative. Granerød argues that the composition of Gen 14* was triggered by a gap in the narrative after 13:17, which

refers to the “length and breadth of the land” promised to Abraham without detailing it. Granerød deems Gen 14* to be the product of narrative development in late biblical times that fills the gap of information about the lay of the land promised to Abraham. According to Granerød, “the *Genesis Apocryphon* may give us a first-hand glimpse into how ancient Jewish scribes worked in order to fill out what they saw as a *Leerstelle*” (i.e., a gap in the narrative, 84–85). Notwithstanding this intriguing evidence, the application of this information and that of Jubilees to Gen 14* may amount to circular reasoning, if literary history and reception history are put on a par. The literary explanation that Gen 14* fills a gap left by Gen 13:17 may yet also be informative about the literary level of the unfolding of the narrative in Gen 13 and 14, respectively.

In section 6, on the literary building blocks of the author of Gen 14* (99–128), Granerød surveys influences from 1 Sam 30 at the word level, from Gen 10:19 and Deut 29:22 concerning the alliance of five cities, from Num 10–21 and Deut 1:6–3:22 on the cluster of names in Gen 14:5–7, and from Gen 10 on the reference to Abram as Hebrew with Amorite allies (Gen 14:13). In addition to biblical sources of information, Granerød argues for contacts with other peoples from Samaria and old Jewish tradition mentioned in rabbinic literature as extrabiblical backgrounds to names in Gen 14*.

In section 7 (129–52) Granerød goes into authorial historical motivation and the historical meaning of Gen 14*, dating its composition between the fifth and early second centuries B.C.E. (132) and situating Gen 14* against a background of postexilic ideas and events (132–48). Granerød conjectures that “the author of Genesis 14* was a Jewish militant nationalist of some kind—unlike those Jews who hoped that God himself or someone commissioned by him in the latter days would restore the faith of Israel” (151). This takes the “profanity” of Gen 14 with the secondary interpolation of 14:18–20 for granted, which remains to be argued for in his part 3.

In section 8 (155–71), the first section in part 3, Granerød considers preliminary issues of divine epithets, blessings, and the question of a Melchizedek tradition as the starting point for the study of the Melchizedek episode in Gen 14:18–20. In section 9 (172–73) Granerød briefly anticipates a description of his hypothesis, consisting of a Second Temple period reading of Ps 110 as a poetic version of Gen 14*, of the identity of “my lord” in Ps 110:1a with Abraham, and of the composition of Gen 14:18–20 as the result of a secondary assimilation between Gen 14* and Ps 110. Section 10 (174–88) goes into the analysis of Ps 110, dating it to the monarchic period, while emphasizing that Ps 110 was interpreted differently after the end of the monarchy. Section 11 (189–94) surveys the literary phenomenon of assimilation in the Bible, with reference to, among other things, secondary psalm superscriptions, surplus information in poetry as compared to narrative, and assimilation of psalms into historiographic texts. Section 12 (195–214) provides an

analysis of MT Ps 110:4b and thereby takes the supposed time of its composition, the monarchic period, specifically into account. It argues that this passage would make sense if understood in the context of the monarchic period, since the king is addressed as “priest forever.” The translation provided (“for my sake my king is loyal”) likewise makes God refer to the king (213–14). In section 13 (215–22) Granerød’s identification of “my lord” in Ps 110:1 with Abraham depends on a later rabbinic tradition of the interpretation of Ps 110:1 in passages from the Babylonian Talmud and the eleventh-century Jewish commentator Rashi (218–19). Since Granerød adduces no other literary evidence for this exact interpretation, this identification of “my lord” in Ps 110:1 with Abraham appears a matter of late rabbinic Jewish interpretation history, the Second Temple period background of which is difficult if not impossible to verify. In section 14 (223–31) Granerød searches for assimilation between Gen 14* and Ps 110 through a “historiographical reading” of Ps 110, suggesting reasons why David might address Abraham as “my lord,” and through possible correspondence in terminology that appears very partial in view of four cases of non-correspondence and that depends on the premise of correspondence between “my lord” and Abram the Hebrew. In section 15 (232–38) Granerød surveys two possibilities of interpreting Melchizedek in the Melchizedek episode as personification and as legendary biography. In section 16 (239–41) Granerød refers to the LXX version of Gen 14 as the *terminus ante quem* for the date of the Melchizedek episode. Section 17 (242–45) argues that the assimilation model offers the best explanation for the composition of the Melchizedek episode as compared to tradition-historical approaches, while yet admitting the “lack of external proof.” Section 18 (246) provides a summary of part 3.

Part 4, section 19 (249–60), concludes the book with reflections that put the addition of Gen 14 to the Torah into perspective as part of the production of new copies of the Torah, that is, within a literary culture of priestly scribes who would be familiar with a curriculum of standard texts and whose reworking and expansion of Gen 14 reflected a high estimation of the evolving Torah.

This is a learned book that is informative about inner-biblical intertextuality in Gen 14. However, in view of the criticisms offered above, parts of Granerød’s diachronic argumentation about the Abraham tradition and literary assimilation between Gen 14* and Ps 110 appear not wholly convincing to this reviewer.